

All of us at **Soldiers** wish you the happiest of holidays.

John E. Suttle

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2003 Holiday Message

During this holiday season, we remember the sacrifices our Soldiers make while serving the Nation in the far-flung reaches of the globe while preserving the dignity of human life. Soldiers make a difference daily, and demonstrate our Nation's commitment to peace, goodwill, and freedom for all. We also remember that self-determination is a right our Soldiers defend for all freedom-loving people everywhere. We are blessed to serve with and honor our Soldiers, civilians, family members, and retirees who have sacrificed their lives in service to our great Nation and those who selflessly serve to safeguard our way of life. We also acknowledge the essential support provided to our Reserve Components by their employers and home communities.

We find ourselves in extraordinary times as our Army serves our Nation at war. This is not business as usual. Many of our Soldiers have been injured and some have paid the ultimate sacrifice defending our freedoms. Our Soldiers stand in harm's way protecting our rights and our liberty so that we can enjoy this holiday. Being an Army and Nation at war is a serious commitment to victory so that our future generations can enjoy many more holiday seasons to come.

We have much to be proud of. In the last two years we have fought two wars as part of the joint team, liberated over 46 million people from tyranny and oppression, and deployed our forces for homeland security. Our Army has proven to the world, time and time again, that we are up to any task. Around the world, our Soldiers continue to demonstrate courage, intensity, and a dogged determination to succeed.

We are incredibly busy, with more than 300,000 Soldiers deployed in over 120 countries. Every day, noble American Soldiers put it all on the line, standing shoulder to shoulder with all the brave men and women who have sacrificed so much. We are Americans, reflecting the values of the American people and we are very fortunate to be serving the greatest Nation on Earth. Soldiers, Department of the Army civilians, veterans, retirees, and all of their families can take pride in the fact that their service and sacrifices preserve the privilege of living and working in a free society.

May each of you, wherever you are, have a safe, fulfilling, and joyful Holiday Season. God bless each of you and your families, God bless our Army, and God bless the United States.

Peter J. Schoomaker
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

R.L. Brownlee
Acting Secretary of the Army